The peach is one of the most prized fruits, romanticized since ancient times. Though Ohio is not considered a major peach growing state, about 1,000 acres of peach orchards (most the Redhaven cultivar) are grown in Ohio.

**Selection**

There are many varieties of peaches, and except for a few, most varieties are not easy to tell apart. For variety recommendations, contact your local OSU Extension office. Here are some tips for choosing high quality peach fruits:

- The reddish “bloom” on the peach is not a sure sign the peach has been picked at its prime. Instead, look at the undercolor, which should be a deep yellow or creamy white; green indicates immaturity.
- Peaches should be firm to the touch and never hard. Peaches that are hard and green are immature and will never ripen properly. A mature peach will yield to gentle hand pressure.
- Never squeeze a peach; it will easily bruise.
- Avoid over-ripe, bruised, or wrinkled peaches. They will quickly decay.

**Storage**

- The best way to ripen peaches is to place them in a single layer in a loosely closed paper bag or ripening dish at room temperature for a day or two days. Never “stack” peaches as the bottom ones will bruise.
- Store ripe peaches in the refrigerator for up to a week.
- When ready to eat, leave the peach out of the refrigerator for about an hour. Allowing the peach to come to room temperature enhances the flavor.
- Rinse peaches just before eating with cool, running water.
- If your recipe calls for skinned peaches, dip in boiling water for 30–60 seconds, plunge into cold water and slip off the skins. Use immediately or toss with citrus juice or a commercial ascorbic acid mixture to prevent darkening. Place in a covered bowl in the refrigerator until ready for use.

**Nutrition**

A medium-sized peach has about 60 calories, most of which is from naturally derived sugars. Peaches provide vitamins A and C, potassium, and fiber.

**Yield**

Due to the many variables, such as moisture content, size, and variety, it is impossible to give
specific recommendations as to quantities to buy. The recommendations below are approximations only.

- 1 bushel = 48 to 50 pounds
- 1 pound = 3 or 4 medium-sized peaches
- 1 pound = 2 to 3 cups sliced

Peach Crisp

Filling
5 cups sliced fresh peeled peaches
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
¼ teaspoon cinnamon

Topping
½ cup quick-cooking rolled oats
¼ cup flour
¼ cup packed brown sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
3 tablespoons butter or margarine

Toss peaches with sugar, lemon juice, and cinnamon. Place in a 2-qt shallow, greased baking dish. Combine oats, flour, sugar, and cinnamon. Cut in butter or margarine until small particles are formed. Sprinkle topping onto peach mixture. Bake 45 minutes in a 350 degree F oven.

Makes 6–8 servings.

Serving Ideas

- For a delicious meat accompaniment, try grilled peaches. Roll four peeled fresh peaches in a mixture of ½ cup brown sugar and ½ teaspoon ginger. Grill until sugar caramelizes.
- Slice peaches onto waffles or mix crushed peaches with maple syrup and serve over pancakes or waffles.
- Mash a ripe peach (¼ cup puree) into ¼ cup plain nonfat yogurt for a low calorie dessert or snack. A non-caloric sugar substitute may be used to sweeten the snack.
- Try peaches and ice cream, frozen yogurt, or cottage cheese.
- Peaches are suitable for a variety of baked goods, such as pies, cobblers, muffins, and crisps.

For information on preserving peaches, contact your local OSU Extension office for the following fact sheets:

- Preserving Pie Fillings, HYG-5355-08
- Basics for Canning Fruit, HYG-5343-08
- Freezing Fruits, HYG-5349-09
- Drying Fruits and Vegetables, HYG-5347-09
- Safe Handling of Fruits and Vegetables, HYG-5353-09
- Jams, Jellies, and Other Fruit Spreads, HYG-5350-09
- Growing Peaches and Nectarines in the Home Landscape, HYG-1406-98


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